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LETTER DATED 24 MAY 1995 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF AZERBAIJAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to transmit to you a statement issued on 23 May 1995 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Azerbaijani Republic and to request that you have it circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Eldar KOULIEV
Permanent Representative

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Annex

Statement issued on 23 May 1995 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Azerbaijani Republic

On 22 May 1995, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia circulated a statement announcing the Armenian Government's decision to suspend its participation in the negotiations being conducted by the Minsk Group of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) with a view to settling the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. The grounds for this decision are the gas pipeline explosions in Georgian territory, which were allegedly carried out by "agents of the Azerbaijani Government".

In this regard, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan wishes to state the following.

The Azerbaijani Republic, the object not only of aggression but also of terrorism, which has claimed the lives of hundreds of innocent citizens of Azerbaijan and other countries, has repeatedly presented incontrovertible proof of Armenia's perpetration of terrorist acts against our country. Azerbaijan, which has experienced the tragic consequences of such acts, has condemned and once again condemns the practice of international terrorism.

The awkward statement by the Armenian side, based on "evidence at its disposal" which has not, however, been submitted to the international community, is pursuing the obvious goal of diverting world attention from Armenia's undisguised policy of aggression against Azerbaijan. This policy has resulted in the occupation of 20 per cent of Azerbaijani territory as well as ethnic cleansing, which has led to the expulsion of one million Azerbaijanis from their homes.

In this regard, the Security Council adopted resolutions 822 (1993), 853 (1993), 874 (1993) and 884 (1993), in which it demanded the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of the armed forces of the Republic of Armenia from all occupied areas of Azerbaijan. The aggressor has ignored such demands.

The statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia is just one more link in the chain of provocations with which the regime is seeking to undermine the cease-fire and prepare public opinion for a possible resumption of major offensives deep into Azerbaijani territory by the armed forces of Armenia.

By its current decision, the Government of Armenia is openly challenging the international community, rejecting its mediatory initiatives to implement the important decisions of the Budapest summit of OSCE and thereby attempting to consolidate the results of its aggressive policy against Azerbaijan. At the same time, the question inevitably arises: how and by what means does Armenia intend to reach a settlement of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, by suspending its participation in the OSCE negotiations process and putting forward new preconditions?

In the light of the latest statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia, it is surprising that, in response to the proposal by the Azerbaijani delegation at the talks being held under the auspices of the Minsk Group of OSCE to finalize the Political Agreement, the Armenian delegation is unwilling to include a special article on the inadmissibility of terrorism and acts of sabotage. This obvious inconsistency leads to the conclusion that the leaders of Armenia are seeking to use any pretext to disrupt the negotiations process currently taking place in the Minsk Group.

For its part, Azerbaijan reiterates its commitment to observe the cease-fire regime and seek a peaceful settlement of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan within the framework of OSCE.